UNITED
NATIONS

A E

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/190
E/1995/73
20 June 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fiftieth session
Item 104 of the preliminary list*
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Substantive session of 1995
Item 6 (e) of the provisional agenda**
ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 49/128 on the report of the International Conference on Population and Development

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 5	3
II.	REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND FLOW OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR ASSISTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION	6 - 14	5
	A. Consultation	6 - 10	5

* A/50/50/Rev.1.

** E/1995/100.

95-15735 (E) 260695 280695

/...

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
	B. Reporting on resources	11 - 14	6
III.	INSTITUTIONAL FOLLOW-UP ISSUES AND REPORTING PROCEDURES	15 - 47	7
	A. Commission on Population and Development	16 - 21	7
	B. Establishment of a separate Executive Board for the United Nations Population Fund	22 - 26	8
	C. Secretariat support and coordination arrangements for the United Nations system	27 - 37	9
	D. Reporting procedures within the United Nations system regarding population and development issues	38 - 42	12
	E. Matters concerning harmonization, cooperation and collaboration within the United Nations system regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action	43 - 47	13
IV.	IMPLEMENTATION BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND ALL RELATED ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM	48 - 65	14
V.	IMPLEMENTATION BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND	66 - 71	18
VI.	IMPLEMENTATION BY THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT	72 - 75	19

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-ninth session, the General Assembly considered the report of the International Conference on Population and Development, 1/ held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, and adopted resolution 49/128 of 19 December 1994 on the report. In paragraph 35 of that resolution, the Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to report, through the Economic and Social Council, to the Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly put forth a number of requests addressed not only to the Secretary-General but also to the Council, the specialized agencies and all related organizations of the United Nations system, the governing body of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Population Commission, which it decided to rename the Commission on Population and Development. More specifically, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to consult with the various bodies of the United Nations system, as well as with international financial institutions and various bilateral aid organizations and agencies, with a view to promoting an exchange of information among them on the requirements for international assistance, reviewing on a regular basis the specific needs of countries in the field of population and development and maximizing the availability of resources and their most effective utilization. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to prepare periodic reports for the substantive sessions of the Council on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the Conference 2/ and to promote the exchange of information on the requirements for international assistance among the members of the donor community; and requested the specialized agencies and all related organizations of the United Nations system to review and, where necessary, adjust their programmes and activities in line with the Programme of Action and to take appropriate measures to ensure its full and effective implementation, and invited them to report to the Council at its substantive session of 1995 for coordination purposes and to the Assembly at its fiftieth session for policy implications. It decided that the Assembly, the Council and the Commission should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that would play the primary role in the follow-up to the implementation of the Programme of Action and, to that end, decided that the Assembly would organize a regular review of the Programme of Action, that the Council, in assisting the Assembly, would promote an integrated approach, provide system-wide coordination and guidance in the monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action and make recommendations thereon, and that the Commission would monitor, review and assess the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels and advise the Council thereon.

3. The General Assembly recommended that the Council review, at its substantive session of 1995, the Commission's terms of reference and mandate. It also recommended that the Council, pursuant to the decisions made on the terms of reference and enhanced mandate of the revitalized Commission, should consider at its substantive session of 1995 the composition of the Commission, in order to ensure that the Commission fully fulfilled its functions. The Assembly requested the Council, at its substantive session of 1995, to consider

(a) the establishment of a separate executive board of UNFPA; (b) the submission of recommendations to the Secretary-General concerning secretariat support and coordination arrangements for the United Nations system; and (c) the submission of recommendations to the Secretary-General regarding the establishment of an appropriate inter-agency coordination, collaboration and harmonization mechanism for the implementation of the Programme of Action.

4. The General Assembly also requested the Council, at its substantive session of 1995, to review the reporting procedures within the United Nations system regarding population and development issues, including a quinquennial review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action, in order to ensure full support for its implementation, bearing in mind the reporting procedures for all United Nations conferences in the economic and social field; and requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with States, to prepare a report on institutional follow-up issues and reporting procedures in the United Nations system, to be submitted to the Council at its substantive session of 1995. The Assembly requested the Council to discuss the relevant matters concerning the implementation of population and development programmes, as well as matters concerning harmonization, cooperation and collaboration within the United Nations system regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action and to discuss the reports submitted by the different bodies and organs on various matters related to the Programme of Action. The Assembly invited the governing body of UNFPA to oversee, on a regular basis, the response of the Fund to the needs of countries regarding activities to strengthen national population and development programmes and to report to the Council on that matter. The Assembly also requested the Commission at its twenty-eighth session, to review, within its area of competence, the Programme of Action and its implications and to transmit its views to the Council at its substantive session of 1995.

5. The present report highlights the various activities that have been undertaken in implementing the relevant paragraphs of General Assembly resolution 49/128 and responds to the specific mandate contained in paragraph 35 of the resolution (see para. 1 above). It was felt that a single report, consolidating not only the requests addressed to the Secretary-General but also background material on action taken at the intergovernmental level in furtherance of the resolution, should be presented to assist Member States in their deliberations. With a view to providing the requisite information in an organized manner, the report is divided into five sections, devoted to (a) the question of requirements for international assistance and flow of financial resources for assisting the implementation of the Programme of Action; (b) institutional follow-up issues and reporting procedures; (c) implementation by the specialized agencies and all related organizations of the United Nations system; (d) implementation by the governing body of UNFPA and (e) implementation by the Commission.

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND FLOW OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR ASSISTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION

A. Consultation

6. In paragraph 16 of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to consult with the various bodies of the United Nations system, as well as with international financial institutions and various bilateral aid organizations and agencies, with a view to promoting an exchange of information among them on the requirements for international assistance, reviewing on a regular basis the specific needs of countries in the field of population and development and maximizing the availability of resources and their most effective utilization.

7. The Programme of Action spells out, in paragraph 13.15, 2/ the amount of resources needed to implement population and development programmes in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The total costs of the "population package" in the Programme of Action are estimated to be (in 1993 United States dollars): $17.0 billion in 2000, $18.5 billion in 2005, $20.5 billion in 2010 and $21.7 billion in 2015. It is tentatively estimated that up to two thirds of the costs will continue to be met by the countries themselves and one third will come from external sources. However, the least developed countries and other low-income developing countries will require a greater share of external resources on a concessional and grant basis (para. 13.16 of the Programme of Action). Assuming that recipient countries will be able to generate sufficient domestic resources, the need for complementary resource flows from donor countries and international financial institutions would be in the order of (in 1993 United States dollars): $5.7 billion in 2000; $6.1 billion in 2005; $6.8 billion in 2010; and $7.2 billion in 2015.

8. In response to paragraph 16.28 of the Programme of Action, 2/ and in conformity with paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 49/128, the Secretary-General requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to convene a consultation on the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action. The first consultation on resource mobilization took place on 20 January 1995. Representatives from various multilateral and bilateral donor agencies, as well as the World Bank and several regional financial institutions, participated in the consultation.

9. The participants discussed the usefulness of high-level meetings in the mobilization of resources. The participants suggested using existing mechanisms at the country level, such as the Resident Coordinator system, the World Bank consultative groups and the round tables of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for the purpose of mobilizing country-specific resources. It was agreed that global consultations on the topic needed to be convened periodically, preferably at the time of the annual sessions of the Commission on Population and Development.

10. The purpose of these follow-up consultations is to review, based on reports to be prepared for the annual session of the Commission, the flow of financial

resources and the resource requirements for the implementation of the Programme of Action. Country needs assessments could identify countries' priorities and resource needs. These needs could then be discussed during high-level consultations. The assessment of needs will be mainly carried out by using existing tools, such as the reports of the UNFPA Programme Review and Strategy Development exercise, as well as the annual report on the flow of financial resources for population and development programmes to be prepared for the annual sessions of the Commission (see paras. 41 and 43 below) and other relevant reports issued by the various multilateral agencies and organizations.

B. Reporting on resources

11. In paragraph 18 of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare periodic reports for the substantive sessions of the Economic and Social Council on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action and to promote the exchange of information on the requirements for international assistance among the members of the donor community.

12. Since 1986, UNFPA has prepared biennial reports for the Commission on Population and Development on multilateral population assistance. Such reports provided information on resources made available by the various agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to population activities. For the twenty-eighth session of the Commission held from 21 February to 2 March 1995, UNFPA submitted a report entitled "Review of Population Trends, Policies and Programmes: Monitoring of Multilateral Population Assistance", 3/ in which it described the trends in multilateral population assistance and highlighted the substantive areas where such assistance was used. It further reviewed operational measures within the United Nations system for channelling assistance to developing countries.

13. Pursuant to paragraph 18 of General Assembly resolution 49/128, and in view of the increasing need for information on the allocation of domestic resources, UNFPA proposes to replace these reports by an annual report on the amount of financial resources allocated for the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national and international levels. Such reports would provide information in three different areas: (a) the allocation of domestic resources for population and development programmes; (b) the amount of international assistance in the field of population and development; and (c) an assessment of the country-specific needs in terms of financial assistance.

14. UNFPA has currently in place a system to monitor the amount of international assistance for programmes dealing with population and development. Where necessary, this system will be further refined and improved. Data on the allocation of domestic resources for population and development programmes are currently not available on a regular basis. Therefore, UNFPA proposes to develop a system for monitoring and assessing the mobilization of domestic resources. Such a system would also facilitate the monitoring of the implementation of paragraph 7 of resolution 49/128, in which the General Assembly urged all countries to consider their current spending priorities with a view to making additional contributions for the implementation of the

Programme of Action, taking into account the provisions of chapters XIII and XIV thereof and the economic constraints faced by developing countries, in particular the least developed among them.

III. INSTITUTIONAL FOLLOW-UP ISSUES AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

15. The present chapter responds to the provisions of paragraph 30 of resolution 49/128, in which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with States, to prepare a report on institutional follow-up issues and reporting procedures in the United Nations system, to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995. It also includes observations on the requests contained in paragraphs 26 to 29 and 31 of resolution 49/128.

A. Commission on Population and Development

16. In paragraph 26 of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly recommended that the Economic and Social Council review, at its substantive session of 1995, the Commission's terms of reference and mandate so as to bring them fully into line with the provisions of paragraph 23 (c) of the resolution.

17. At its twenty-eighth session, from 21 February to 2 March 1995, the Commission held extensive discussions on its terms of reference and mandate and submitted its views on those issues to the Council for consideration at its substantive session of 1995. In line with paragraph 23 (c) of General Assembly resolution 49/128, the Commission proposed that it assist the Council by monitoring, reviewing and assessing the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels, identify reasons for successes and failure, and advise the Council thereon.

18. To that end, the Commission proposed adopting a topic-oriented and prioritized multi-year work programme, culminating in a quinquennial review and appraisal of the Programme of Action. That work programme, inter alia, would provide a framework to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action; monitor the implementation of the Programme of Action through periodic reports on population trends and policies, population programmes and population and related development activities; review on a regular basis the flow of financial resources and the funding mechanisms to achieve the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action; undertake a quinquennial review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action and in implementing its recommendations, and reporting its findings to the Council; maintain and enhance public attention and support for the implementation of the Programme of Action, through the dissemination of its monitoring, review and assessment reports in a clear and concise format; consider the reports of the meetings of inter-agency mechanisms established by the Secretary-General to ensure coordination, collaboration and harmonization in the implementation of the Programme of Action; consider reports on the activities of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for the implementation of the Programme of Action, in accordance with the arrangements adopted by the Council for

consultation with those organizations; and provide appropriate recommendations to the Council, on the basis of an integrated consideration of the reports and issues related to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

19. With regard to the topics to be included in the prioritized multi-year work programme, the Commission proposed, as a first theme for 1996, reproductive rights and reproductive health, including population information, education and communication. Themes for future years would include international migration, with special emphasis on the linkages between migration and development, and on gender issues and the family (1997); health and mortality, with special emphasis on the linkages between health and development, and on gender and age (1998); and population growth, structure and distribution, with special emphasis on sustained economic growth and sustainable development, including education (1999). In addition, in 1999, the Commission would consider the quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action.

20. In paragraph 27 of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly recommended that the Economic and Social Council, pursuant to the decisions made on the terms of reference and enhanced mandate of the revitalized Commission, should consider at its substantive session of 1995 the composition of the Commission, in order to ensure that the Commission fully fulfilled its functions as provided in paragraph 23 of the resolution, taking into account the integrated, multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach of the Programme of Action, as well as the membership of the other functional commissions of the Council.

21. The Secretary-General would like in this context to underscore the importance of representatives to serve on the revitalized Commission possessing the necessary high qualifications and expertise.

B. Establishment of a separate Executive Board for the United Nations Population Fund

22. The International Conference on Population and Development addressed the issue of the governance of UNFPA. In paragraph 16.27 of its Programme of Action, the Conference invited the General Assembly to consider, at its forty-ninth session, in accordance with its resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993, the establishment of a separate executive board for UNFPA. Over the past 25 years, the Assembly has twice taken decisions to improve the scope and quality of governance of UNFPA. In both instances, the Assembly referred to the level of the Fund's resources and the scope of its operations as factors contributing to those decisions.

23. In its first resolution 3019 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, the General Assembly, noting that the resources of UNFPA and its scope of operations had grown to a size which made its supervision by an intergovernmental body desirable, decided that the Governing Council of UNDP should be the governing body of UNFPA. In the second instance, resolution 34/104 of 14 December 1979, the Assembly, noting with satisfaction that UNFPA had become a fully viable entity within the United Nations system in the population field, owing in particular to its level of resources and its increasing assistance to the developing countries, invited the Governing Council of UNDP to consider devoting

a specific period of time during its sessions to adequate and separate consideration of items relating to UNFPA.

24. The General Assembly further addressed the issue of UNFPA governance in paragraph 21 of the annex to its resolution 48/162 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations system in the economic, social and related fields, noting that the need for a separate executive board for UNFPA should be further considered in the light of the outcome of the Conference.

25. On 17 and 18 November 1994, while discussing the follow-up to the Conference, a number of Member States referred in their plenary statements in the General Assembly to the issue of a separate executive board for UNFPA (see A/49/PV.58-60). Some spoke in favour of establishing a separate executive board, since it could enable the Fund to fulfil better its important role and responsibility in the implementation of and follow-up to the Programme of Action, in the coordination of the follow-up to the Conference, and in the provision of the technical and financial assistance required to help developing countries meet their own population and development needs. It would also encourage the participation of population and development experts in the deliberations of the board. Others were not convinced of the necessity for a separate board, since they were of the view that the reforms on governance of the United Nations funds and programmes, as envisaged in General Assembly resolution 48/162, had only been initiated recently. They, therefore, suggested that the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board should devote more time for consideration of UNFPA matters at its regular sessions. Several other Member States were of the opinion that the topic deserved serious consideration by the Assembly and that more study was needed on the subject. The Assembly, while discussing the report of the Conference, in turn, requested the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, to consider the establishment of a separate executive board of UNFPA (resolution 49/128, para. 28 (a)).

26. In 1994, the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board devoted five days to UNFPA items. For joint UNDP/UNFPA organizational matters, preparations and reporting, the Board spent an additional one-and-a-half days. During 1995, it is expected that the Board will take up UNFPA items for a total of approximately eight-and-a-half days, and two days for organizational matters and joint consideration of UNDP/UNFPA items. If a separate executive board were to be established for UNFPA, in the light of experience and in line with current practices of the existing Executive Boards, it would need an annual session of 4 to 5 days and three regular sessions of approximately 3 days each, bringing to 14 the annual total number of days needed for consideration of UNFPA matters. There would be some cost implications for servicing the meetings of a separate executive board for UNFPA, primarily for staff time and secretariat support related to the preparations for and convening of the meetings.

C. Secretariat support and coordination arrangements for the United Nations system

27. In paragraph 28 (b) of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, to consider the submission of recommendations to the Secretary-General

concerning secretariat support and coordination arrangements for the United Nations system. In paragraph 28 (c), the Assembly requested the Council to consider the submission of recommendations to the Secretary-General regarding the establishment of an appropriate inter-agency coordination, collaboration and harmonization mechanism for the implementation of the Programme of Action.

28. With respect to secretariat support, the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the Secretariat, through its Population Division in particular, has been the focal point for the provision of integrated secretariat support to the Commission. In the past, this role has consisted of the provision of substantive support, the preparation of documentation and the coordination of relevant inputs. Effective substantive support for the work programme of the Commission has required the involvement of many organizations of the United Nations system, in particular UNFPA, and could only have been carried out on the basis of cooperative and coordinated relationships. At the same time, UNFPA has taken the lead in coordinating and implementing operational activities in this field. It is proposed that this basic pattern of work should continue with respect to provision of support for the Commission and implementation of the Programme of Action.

29. The Commission should continue to act as the governing body for the Population Division. A reassessment of priorities and internal organization of the Division in response to the Programme of Action is under way. Work in the Division will continue on basic population trends, the evolution of population policies, understanding links between population and development and on the crucial underpinnings of population estimates and projections.

30. In line with paragraph 16.29 of the Programme of Action, the General Assembly requested, in paragraph 22 of its resolution 49/128, the specialized agencies and all related organizations of the United Nations system to review and, where necessary, adjust their programmes and activities in line with the Programme of Action and take appropriate measures to ensure its full and effective implementation, taking into account the specific needs of developing countries, and invited them to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995 for coordination purposes and to the Assembly at its fiftieth session for policy implications. Background material in this regard is contained in section IV of the present report. In addition, the Assembly stressed, in paragraph 20 of the same resolution, the importance of continued and enhanced cooperation and coordination by all relevant organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system and the specialized agencies in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

31. The Administrator of UNDP, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, asked the Executive Director of UNFPA, who served as Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development, to convene and chair an Inter-Agency Task Force on the Implementation of the Programme of Action. The overall aim of the Task Force, which first met on 13 December 1994, is to develop a United Nations system-wide coordinated approach for the implementation of the Programme of Action. The following organizations were represented at the first meeting of the Task Force: the United Nations, including the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis and the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, UNICEF,

UNDP, UNFPA, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank.

32. The focus of the Task Force is on country-level cooperation, building on the Resident Coordinator system and arrangements already in place, such as the country strategy notes. In the first phase of its work, the Task Force has set up four working groups addressing specific topics/sectors. Each group is developing operational guidelines for use by the Resident Coordinators, which are to serve as tools to facilitate system-wide collaboration in the design, implementation and monitoring of country-level initiatives in specific areas. The task force modality will enable the forging of system-wide coordinated responses that draw on the comparative advantages of the agencies and organizations concerned. A second meeting of the Task Force is anticipated for June/July 1995, at which time it will review the progress made and further specify its programme of work, taking into account major topics of interest and themes identified in the relevant United Nations bodies, including in particular the themes identified by the Commission on Population and Development at its twenty-eighth session.

33. During its first meeting, the Task Force decided to utilize the modality of working groups to develop proposals for inter-agency collaboration at the country level, in the first instance in the following four areas: (a) a common data system at the national level in the field of health, notably in the areas of infant, child and maternal mortality; (b) basic education, with special attention to gender disparities; (c) policy-related issues, including the drafting of a common advocacy statement on social issues; and (d) women's empowerment. It is envisaged that a fifth working group, on reproductive health, will be established in response to suggestions made by a number of United Nations agencies.

34. All four inter-agency working groups have met. The working group on basic education, with special attention to gender disparities, met on 7 March 1995 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris; the working group on a common data system at the national level in the field of health, notably in the areas of infant, child and maternal mortality, met on 4 May at UNICEF headquarters in New York; and the working group on women's empowerment, which met at the office of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in New York on 16 May. The working groups are all in the process of finalizing guidelines for use by Resident Coordinators to enhance country-level cooperation in these fields. The working group on policy-related issues met on 3 May and has drafted an advocacy statement for approval by the Task Force.

35. The Commission on Population and Development, in its report to the Economic and Social Council, 4/ requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the Task Force be established on a permanent basis and be accountable through the Commission for system-wide coordination. It further suggested that intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and international financial institutions be invited to participate in the Conference monitoring and evaluation process to the maximum extent possible, as well as in

the Task Force. Furthermore, the Commission decided to consider the reports of the Task Force on an annual basis.

36. At its last session, in February 1995, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) adopted a statement welcoming the convening of an inter-agency mechanism, with UNFPA as the lead agency, with the objectives of policy development, coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action by the United Nations system (see para. 31 above). ACC requested the inter-agency mechanism to work towards the development of a common framework for the system-wide follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development and to report thereon, through the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions, to ACC at its second regular session in 1995.

37. In accordance with the Commission's decision, reports on the work of the Task Force will be submitted annually to the Commission. Such reports would review the progress and activities of the Task Force in ensuring system-wide collaboration in the implementation of the Programme of Action, with special emphasis on the theme chosen by the Commission for that year. These reports should also identify any areas where collaboration has met with difficulties.

D. Reporting procedures within the United Nations system regarding population and development issues

38. In paragraph 29 of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, to review the reporting procedures within the United Nations system regarding population and development issues, including a quinquennial review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action, in order to ensure full support for its implementation, bearing in mind the reporting procedures for all United Nations conferences in the economic and social field.

39. In paragraph 23 of the same resolution, the General Assembly decided that the Assembly, through its role in policy formulation, the Council, through its role in overall guidance and coordination, in accordance with Assembly resolution 48/162, and a revitalized Population Commission should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that would play the primary role in the follow-up to the implementation of the Programme of Action, keeping in mind the need to develop a common framework for a coherent follow-up to United Nations summits and conferences.

40. In its report to the Council, 4/ the Commission on Population and Development recommended that the Commission should each year consider five reports covering different topics in the area of population and development and should every five years consider a review and appraisal report on the progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

41. The reports which will be prepared annually are: world population monitoring; the report of the Secretary-General on the monitoring of population programmes; the report of the Task Force for the implementation of the Programme

of Action; the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for the implementation of the Programme of Action; and the report of the Secretary-General on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action. In addition, a report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the Programme of Action will be prepared quinquennially.

42. The emphasis placed in paragraph 23 of resolution 49/128 on the need for a common framework for follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development and other major international conferences in the economic and social sectors was warmly welcomed by ACC at its February 1995 session. ACC considered that a main objective in that regard should be to assist countries in the coordinated implementation and monitoring of the programmes of action adopted by those conferences. ACC noted that such a common framework should be designed to promote a coordinated response by the United Nations system to cross-cutting and interrelated recommendations emanating from those conferences, and should reduce the burden of reporting on countries as well as United Nations system organizations. A separate report on the coordinated follow-up to major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields is before the current session of the Economic and Social Council in document E/1995/86.

E. Matters concerning harmonization, cooperation and collaboration within the United Nations system regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action

43. In paragraph 31 of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council: (a) to discuss the relevant matters concerning the implementation of population and development programmes, as well as matters concerning harmonization, cooperation and collaboration within the United Nations system regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action; and (b) and to discuss the reports submitted by the different bodies and organs on various matters related to the Programme of Action.

44. ACC reviewed the implications of the International Conference on Population and Development for the United Nations system at its first regular session of 1995 (28 February-1 March). The statement adopted by ACC in this context underscored the importance of shared responsibility within the United Nations system for the implementation of the Programme of Action and the need for coordination among United Nations agencies and organizations at the country level, through the Resident Coordinator system and the country strategy notes, where they exist or are under preparation. ACC emphasized the need for the international community to assist interested Governments in organizing appropriate national-level follow-up, including national capacity-building for project formulation and programme management, as well as strengthening of coordination and evaluation mechanisms to assess the implementation of the Programme of Action.

45. ACC called upon all concerned organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen their partnerships with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and other major groups active in the population and

development field in order to maximize the impact of their programmes and projects at the country level. Other subjects covered by the ACC statement included, as noted above, the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force and the development of a common framework for the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development and other major international conferences in the economic and social sectors.

46. The enlarged scope of population activities and the introduction of new concepts delineated in the Programme of Action have brought to the fore the need to review the existing standard classification of population activities adopted by ACC in 1977. Accordingly, ACC recommended that the Task Force initiate the review on the basis of an updated classification to be prepared by UNFPA, and in consultation with other United Nations agencies and organizations concerned.

47. Collaborative action has been initiated by the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis and UNFPA to establish the criteria and the methodology for updating the existing classification, in line with the concepts of the International Conference on Population and Development. As soon as work on this is finalized, the updated classification will be submitted to the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions for its review, and eventual submission to ACC at its second regular session of 1995.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND ALL RELATED ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

48. In paragraph 22 of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly requested the specialized agencies and all related organizations of the United Nations system to review and, where necessary, adjust their programmes and activities in line with the Programme of Action and to take appropriate measures to ensure its full and effective implementation, taking into account the specific needs of developing countries, and invited them to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995 for coordination purposes and to the Assembly at its fiftieth session for policy implications.

49. Many organizations have already begun to delineate their role in the implementation of the Programme of Action and have submitted initial reports to sessions of their respective governing bodies which have taken place since the Conference.

50. The Executive Board of UNICEF requested, at its October 1994 session, that a report be submitted to it at its second regular session of 1995, in March, on the role of UNICEF in the follow-up to the Conference. In this report, 5/ UNICEF identified its priority areas in the follow-up to the Conference. It will focus on strengthening its own strategies, advocacy and programme interventions to promote the reproductive health of women and youth, specifically, by improving their access to essential and emergency obstetric care, promoting family planning and preventing sexually transmitted diseases, including the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). UNICEF will also expand its efforts to provide universal access to basic education, improve gender equity and enhance the status of girls and women in society. These efforts will be carried out in close collaboration

with UNFPA and other organizations actively involved in these issues. The report was discussed during the March 1995 session of the UNICEF Executive Board, and, based on those discussions, a revised report will be submitted to the UNICEF Executive Board at its third regular session of 1995.

51. ILO prepared a report for the two hundred and sixty-first session of its Governing Body (November 1994), delineating its role in the implementation of the Programme of Action. Likewise, WHO, in a report submitted to the Executive Board at its ninety-fifth session (January 1995), detailed its plans, following the International Conference on Population and Development, inter alia, to develop a comprehensive strategy for research and action in sexual and reproductive health and noted that it would continue to exercise its normative and research roles in reproductive health.

52. In addition, WHO prepared a report, entitled "Reproductive Health: WHO's Role in a Global Strategy", for submission to the World Health Assembly at its forty-eighth session (May 1995), in which it delineated its role in the global strategy on reproductive health. The strategy of WHO in this field will focus on four broad interrelated areas: (a) international and national advocacy for the concept of reproductive health and for the policies and programmes promoted by WHO; (b) research aimed at assessing needs, at adapting and applying existing knowledge and at developing new approaches and interventions as well as the coordination of global efforts in these areas; (c) normative functions, including policy development, strategic approaches, norms, standards and guidelines; and (d) providing technical support to Member States and others in formulating, implementing and evaluating comprehensive national reproductive health policies and programmes.

53. FAO presented a document on collaboration within the United Nations system and with other organizations (CL/108/17) to the FAO Council at its one hundred and eighth session (5-16 June 1995), in which it outlined its plans for the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development. FAO considers the following areas of concern as important in its implementation of the Programme of Action: the interrelationships between population and natural resources; the food/population balance at regional, subregional and national levels; gender concerns; the role of environmental and socio-economic factors in rural migration patterns and their impact on sustainable development; and improving the collection, analysis and use of data on population depending on agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

54. The effective integration of population concerns into FAO's activities in agriculture will be one of the main goals in the coming years. Other steps proposed to the FAO Council are: revision of the long- and medium-term plans for 1994-2001 specifically to integrate population issues into the cross-sectoral priorities and programmes regarding environment and sustainable development, people and development, poverty alleviation and nutrition and food security; participation in efforts to mobilize and allocate resources for implementation of the Programme of Action; and the sensitizing and training of regional and subregional offices and FAO representatives on the integration of population concerns in the formulation of FAO programmes and projects.

55. The Programme of Action contains several provisions that correspond to priority areas for UNESCO's work. Education was identified in the Programme as the crucial factor for development and for social and demographic change. In responding to the results of the Conference and in line with General Assembly resolution 49/128, UNESCO has included in its draft medium-term strategy for 1996-2001 and in its draft programme and budget for 1996-1997, which are being submitted to the organization's General Conference at its forthcoming twenty-eighth session (October-November 1995), activities in follow-up to the Programme of Action, in particular in the areas of education, especially for girls and women; the empowerment of women; the relationship between population, development and the environment; population information, education and communication; educational and socio-cultural aspects of migration.

56. The transdisciplinary project Environment and Population Education and Information for Human Development launched by UNESCO in 1994 is developing an integrated approach to education, training and information activities designed to deal with the interwoven issues of population, environment and development, including gender issues.

57. As lead agency of the Inter-Agency Task Force's working group dealing with basic education, with special attention to gender disparities, UNESCO convened a first meeting, with the participation of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, ILO, FAO, WHO and the World Bank, at UNESCO headquarters in March 1995. UNESCO also participated in meetings of the other working groups and will continue to cooperate fully with its partner organizations at the inter-agency and at the country level.

58. During the discussion of the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development in ACC, the World Bank reiterated its commitment to Conference goals and its readiness to participate actively in coordinated follow-up, particularly with regard to the mobilization of resources in support of the Programme of Action, and efforts to operationalize the reproductive health approach in population programmes. The Bank itself would focus on the demographic transition in the poorest countries: linking population more effectively to core development goals, particularly those that empower women; and expanding assistance beyond family planning to a wider range of reproductive-health goals and the education of women and girls.

59. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis prepared a report on its proposed future work programme for consideration by the Commission on Population and Development at its twenty-eighth session. The Commission proposed that the Division continue to carry out research and analytical studies on population and development issues in line with the recommendations of the Programme of Action but with further emphasis on areas such as reproductive rights and reproductive health and international migration.

60. UNFPA has embarked on a number of technical reviews and consultations following the International Conference on Population and Development. The Geographical Divisions of UNFPA convened regional consultations to identify regional needs and priorities in the follow-up to the Conference. UNFPA is in the process of reviewing all its country programmes to align them more closely

with the basic principles of the Programme of Action. UNFPA is revising the existing policy guidelines in the areas of reproductive health and family planning; information, education and communication; gender, population and development; population and sustainable development; and the collaboration with the non-governmental sector.

61. With regard to the area of reproductive health, UNFPA convened an "Expert Consultation on Reproductive Health and Family Planning: Directions for UNFPA Assistance" in early December 1994. Discussions addressed the problem of defining the basic components and scope of reproductive health care. In addition, a consultative meeting on a global framework for the assessment and monitoring of reproductive health was held at UNFPA headquarters from 3 to 5 April 1995. The participants discussed the feasibility of setting up of a global initiative to develop indicators for monitoring and evaluating reproductive health programmes. They recommended, inter alia, that such a global framework should confine its activities to those leading to the development of guidelines for monitoring reproductive health, clearer and standardized definitions of the different concepts of reproductive health, and manuals on methodologies.

62. As part of the process of translating the concept of reproductive health into effective programmes at the country level, UNFPA convened a workshop on reproductive health for technical advisers of the UNFPA Technical Support Services/Country Support Team system. The workshop was held at WHO headquarters in Geneva. The Division of Family Health of WHO provided an overview of the framework of WHO for translating the concept of reproductive health into action. Specialists from the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the Population Council and the Royal Tropical Institute of the Netherlands served as resource persons.

63. UNFPA further organized a workshop for Technical Support Services/Country Support Team specialists in population information, education and communication at UNESCO headquarters in October 1994. The purpose of the workshop was to brief the specialists on the latest approaches to information, education and communication and population education, based on the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development. Furthermore, a joint ILO/UNFPA workshop for UNFPA Country Support Team advisers, which was held from 26 October to 2 November 1994, discussed the role of the UNFPA Technical Support Services/Country Support Team system in the successful implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, particularly in the area of population policies and development strategies.

64. UNFPA established an internal task force on International Conference on Population and Development implementation, inter alia, to plan and support follow-up activities at various levels. In the initial phase of its work programme, the task force has been concerned with inter-agency follow-up and coordination, as well as monitoring intergovernmental initiatives in the aftermath of the Conference. The task force further provides secretariat support to the Executive Director of UNFPA in the tasks urdertaken by UNFPA related to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

65. In 1987, UNFPA had set up a Panel on Women, Population and Development composed of experts in the field of women and development, to advise the Fund on different aspects of its policy in this area. On 5 and 6 April 1995, the panel, which was renamed the Panel on Gender, Population and Development, met for the fifth time to discuss the future direction of UNFPA in the area of gender and population, taking into account the outcome of the Conference. Furthermore, UNFPA decided to establish a non-governmental organization advisory committee to advise the Fund on various aspects of its policies and programming, since the successful implementation of the Programme of Action will to a large extent depend on an expanded role for the non-governmental organization community. The first meeting of this committee was held on 12 and 13 April at UNFPA headquarters. The participants recommended, inter alia, that UNFPA strengthen its partnerships with the non-governmental and private sector at the country level and use its position as a convener to bring Governments and non-governmental organizations together in their common efforts to implement the Programme of Action.

V. IMPLEMENTATION BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

66. The present section responds to the provisions of paragraph 32 of resolution 49/128, wherein the General Assembly invited the governing body of UNFPA to oversee, on a regular basis, the response of the Fund to the needs of countries regarding activities to strengthen national population and development programmes, including the specific requests from developing countries for assistance in the preparation of national reports, within its area of competence, and to report to the Economic and Social Council on the matter.

67. The UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board met twice, from 6 to 10 October 1994 and from 10 to 13 January 1995, to discuss, inter alia, the follow-up to the Conference. At the October 1994 session, UNFPA explained the initiatives it had taken immediately after the Conference. The Board welcomed the immediate and positive steps UNFPA had taken in line with the Programme of Action. The Board members emphasized the importance of enhanced coordination among United Nations agencies and organizations.

68. At the January 1995 session of the Executive Board, UNFPA presented an interim report, in which it outlined, in a preliminary manner, its programme directions in the light of the Conference. 6/ Based on the comments received in the Board and on further consultations with its United Nations system partners and informal consultations with members of the Board, the Fund will present to the annual meeting of the Board (June 1995), a report on the programme priorities and future directions of UNFPA in the light of the Conference. 7/

69. In its report to the Executive Board, UNFPA proposes to concentrate its future funding in three core areas: (a) reproductive health and family planning; (b) population policy; and (c) advocacy. The selection of these three programme areas will enable UNFPA to sharpen the strategic focus of its programming and to capitalize on its comparative advantage and experience in the field of population and development. Within each programme area, support will be given for research, training, awareness creation and information

dissemination. The Conference recognized that there could be no sustainable development without the full and equal participation of women, gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women. Gender concerns will, therefore, be integral components of all aspects of UNFPA programming and will be factored into all activities undertaken in the three core areas as a cross-cutting dimension.

70. Based on the advice provided by the Executive Board, UNFPA will implement programmes in the above-mentioned three core areas at the country, regional and interregional levels. In all of its programming, UNFPA will work closely with Governments to assure that activities are tailored to their specific needs; build partnerships with implementing agencies, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector; and expand coordination with relevant United Nations funds, programmes and organizations. The overall aim is to build national capacity in formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating national population and development programmes. Priority will be given to those inputs that enhance national capacity and promote self-reliance for the achievement of sustainable development.

71. Inevitably, these programmatic orientations will also have implications for the allocation of resources. UNFPA will, therefore, develop a strategy for future allocations of its limited resources to help build capacities in developing countries to implement the Programme of Action, based on different levels of financial needs for multilateral assistance and the level of achievement with regard to quantitative goals of the Conference.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION BY THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

72. In paragraph 34 of its resolution 49/128, the General Assembly requested the Commission on Population and Development, at its twenty-eighth session, to review, within its area of competence the Programme of Action and its implications and to transmit its views to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995.

73. The Council will have before it the report of the Commission at its twenty-eighth session, 21 February-2 March 1995. As requested in the resolution, the Commission reviewed, within its area of competence, the Programme of Action and its implications and transmitted its views to the Council for consideration at its substantive session in 1995.

74. As indicated in its report, the Commission examined the terms of reference, mandate and programme of work of the Commission. In addition to the new mandate related to the monitoring, reviewing and assessing of the implementation of the Programme of Action, the Commission proposed that it assist the Council by arranging for studies and advising the Council on population issues and trends, including the determinants and consequences of these trends; integrating population and development strategies; population and related development policies and programmes; provision of population assistance, upon request, to developing countries and, on a temporary basis, to countries with economies in transition; and any other population and development questions on which either

the principal or subsidiary organs of the United Nations or the specialized agencies might seek advice.

75. The Commission, acting as the governing body of the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, reviewed the proposed programme of work for the biennium 1996-1997. As noted above, the biennial programme of work recommended to the Commission was generally found to correspond to the priorities established in the Programme of Action of the Conference. In addition, the Commission underlined the need for the work programme to take fully into account the outcomes of other United Nations conferences and summit meetings.

Notes

1/ A/CONF.171/13 and Add.1.

2/ A/CONF/171/13, chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

3/ E/CN.9/1995/3.

4/ E/CN.9/1995/L.3/Add.1.

5/ E/ICEF/1995/12.

6/ DP/1995/8.

7/ DP/1995/25.

UNITED
NATIONS

A E

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/201
E/1995/74
20 June 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fiftieth session
Item 20 (c) of the preliminary list*
STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Substantive session of 1995
Item 6 (u) of the provisional agenda**
ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS

INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report contains information on progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 49/22 A of 2 December 1994 and of the recommendations of the mid-term review of the implementation of the International Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, carried out by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1994. The report is submitted biennially to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, as requested by the Assembly in resolution 44/236 of 22 December 1989 (annex, para. 10).

The present report complements the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, as it also incorporates the report on the implementation of disaster prevention and preparedness related to General Assembly resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and 49/139 A of 20 December 1994.

* A/50/50/Rev.1.

** E/1995/100.

95-16147 (E) 050795 070795

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 8	4
II.	PROGRESS MADE IN PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION	9 - 49	5
	A. Activities at the regional, subregional and country levels	11 - 31	6
	1. Africa	11 - 14	6
	2. Asia and the Pacific	15 - 19	6
	3. Latin America and the Caribbean	20 - 24	7
	4. Eastern and central European States	25 - 26	8
	5. Western European and other States	27 - 31	9
	B. United Nations system	32 - 40	10
	C. Scientific and technical organizations	41 - 44	12
	D. Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations	45	12
	E. Department of Humanitarian Affairs	46 - 49	13
III.	FRAMEWORK OF ACTION FOR THE DECADE	50 - 87	14
	A. Special High-Level Council	51 - 52	14
	B. Scientific and Technical Committee	53 - 55	14
	C. Contact Group of Permanent Missions	56 - 57	15
	D. National committees and country focal points	58 - 60	15
	E. Working Group of the United Nations Steering Committee for the Decade	61 - 63	16
	F. Secretariat of the Decade	64 - 87	16
	1. Management and coordination	64 - 67	16
	2. Information management and early-warning systems	68 - 72	17
	3. Promotional activities	73 - 77	18

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
	4. Demonstration projects	78 - 81	19
	5. Trust Fund for the Decade	82 - 87	19
IV.	PROGRAMME FOR THE PERIOD 1995-2000	88 - 107	21
	A. Policy orientation	89 - 92	21
	B. Objective	93	22
	C. Targets	94	22
	D. Strategy	95	22
	E. Action plan	96 - 106	23
	1. Development of national capacities	97	23
	2. Application of knowledge and technology	98 - 99	23
	3. Information management, public information and promotion	100 - 101	24
	4. International collaboration	102 - 106	24
	F. Time-frame	107	25
V.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	108	27

I. INTRODUCTION

1. As countries formulate their development plans and commit resources to their priorities, thought is too seldom given to the possible loss and destruction that could be caused by natural disasters until disaster strikes. The Bangladesh "killer" cyclone in 1990, the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in 1991, the Chinese river floods in 1991 and 1995, the Flores Island tsunami in 1992, the drought in southern Africa in 1993-1994, the United States floods in 1993, the earthquake in Northridge, California, in 1994, the mudslides in Colombia in 1994, the earthquake in Maharashtra, India, in 1994, the floods in western Europe in 1995, and most recently, the earthquake in Kobe, Japan, are reminders of the devastation caused by natural disasters. These events occurred during the brief five-year period since the beginning of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and each was the worst of its kind in terms of destruction caused. The severity of such disasters is likely to increase even further if no remedial action is taken.

2. No country, whatever its economic standing or social achievement, is immune to the effects of natural disasters. Recent events can, and should, concentrate the attention of Governments and enhance the willingness of people towards efforts to reduce potential risks. Modern technology and scientific knowledge can be utilized to indicate where hazards are greatest and identify the means to avert their worst effects. Cooperation, both internationally and within countries, is needed to make the most out of the lessons learned. Capacities must be built and strengthened in order to increase the ability to act. The challenge is motivation - at all levels, and by all concerned. Without it, little can be done to keep loss of life and property in check. It must be understood that natural disasters not only cause damage, they also retard social and economic development through their secondary effects.

3. The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction is entering critical years. It is important to emphasize directions necessary for its success. Earlier promotional efforts and activities, particularly in the area of increasing awareness of disaster reduction and its relationship to sustainable development, have paved the way for a widespread practical application of disaster-reduction policies and measures.

4. Since the proclamation of the Decade by the General Assembly, in resolution 44/236 of 22 December 1989, the International Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction has generated a variety of activities. Building on those efforts, the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, held in Yokohama, Japan, from 23 to 27 May 1994, succeeded in providing renewed emphasis and focus to the objectives of the Decade. In addition to contributing to the mid-term review of the Decade by the Economic and Social Council during its substantive session of 1994, the Conference revitalized the international community's dedication to disaster reduction.

5. The primary outcome of the Conference, the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation, containing the Principles, the Strategy and the Plan of Action, 1/ supplemented by the Yokohama Message 2/ and the recommendations and reports of the Main

Committee and Technical Committees of the Conference, 3/ constitute the blueprint for the second half of the Decade and the future of disaster reduction.

6. These forward-looking outputs of the Conference and the mid-term review of the implementation of the International Framework of Action for the Decade were considered by the General Assembly during its forty-ninth session and endorsed by the Assembly in resolution 49/22 A of 2 December 1994. In that resolution, the Assembly noted, inter alia, that natural disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness measures can reduce the need for disaster response, which, in comparison, is far more expensive. The General Assembly, consequently, called for continued financial and technical support for activities of the Decade, including those of its secretariat.

7. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its fiftieth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution and of the recommendations of the mid-term review. In order to secure the timely implementation of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action, the Secretary-General was also invited to make proposals "on all possible ways and means to ensure the functional security and continuity of disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness".

8. The General Assembly, in resolution 49/22 B of 20 December 1994, requested the Secretary-General to report, within the framework of the Decade, to the Assembly at its fiftieth session on early-warning capacities within the United Nations system. The Assembly also solicited proposals on how early-warning systems might be improved and better coordinated in order to provide for an adequate response to natural disasters and similar disasters with an adverse impact on the environment.

II. PROGRESS MADE IN PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION

9. At the mid-point of the Decade, the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction provided the impetus and exerted a strong influence on programme activity for the second half of the Decade. Delegations from 155 countries attended the Conference. Their representatives exchanged information, ideas and experiences with participants from the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations. They interacted with political, scientific and technical specialists from many programme sectors. The Conference thus strengthened the relationships among all concerned partners in the Decade and provided the basis for future activity.

10. With renewed emphasis being given to practical applications at the national and local levels, the importance of regional and subregional organizations is growing. Detailed information on the activities undertaken within the United Nations system by technical and scientific bodies and by other collaborating organizations is provided in information reports prepared by the secretariat of the Decade. The secretariat is also in the process of collecting information on country-level activities, with a view to compiling a report.

A. Activities at the regional, subregional and country levels

1. Africa

11. Regional activities related to disaster reduction and the Decade are coordinated with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). The World Health Organization (WHO) Emergency Preparedness and Relief Unit in Addis Ababa is also supporting those efforts. The Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Desert Locust Control Organization (DLCO), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) are among the subregional organizations whose members are addressing common disaster-reduction problems.

12. Africa demonstrates how disaster reduction can be pursued systematically and collaboratively at the regional level, while respecting the particular needs of individual countries. At the Yokohama Conference, the African countries presented a common platform for progress in disaster reduction that carefully related tenets of disaster reduction to the prevailing hazard and social conditions of the continent.

13. There has been a strong impetus to incorporate disaster-reduction planning in development programmes and to support individual country efforts by a range of regional and subregional groupings in various sectors. Many of them reach to local community levels of activity. The degree of motivation in Africa was clearly demonstrated when the OAU Council of Ministers formally adopted the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action in July 1994 as a common basis to guide African progress towards disaster reduction.

14. In pursuit of that objective, three subregional workshops, covering the entire continent, took place in Botswana, Burkina Faso and Kenya between November 1994 and June 1995. They were organized by the Disaster Reduction Division of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), in coordination with regional and subregional organizations and institutions. The workshops enabled government officials to assess country needs and to proceed to develop capacities for disaster reduction at national and local levels. These workshops serve as examples of the importance of regional collaboration to achieve national action. A number of country proposals have been prepared since the workshops were held. Six more country workshops have been conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/DHA Disaster Management Training Programme, from which it is expected new projects will be developed.

2. Asia and the Pacific

15. In Asia, regional activities related to disaster reduction and the Decade reflect the physical and cultural diversity of the continent. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) cooperates with a number of countries in the region, particularly in disaster awareness and preparedness associated with water resources and related hazards. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), through its Office of the

Environment, is active in promoting programme relationships between disaster reduction and environmental concerns. The Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) in Bangkok continues to be a major facility for disaster-management training throughout the region. It also provides technical assistance to countries for developing low-cost indigenous capabilities. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) plays an important role by incorporating disaster-reduction measures in its programmes throughout the region.

16. The exposure and the extent of experience of some of the larger countries of the region have enabled them to become recognized sources for disaster-reduction expertise. As such, they have developed into catalysts for interregional cooperation.

17. In addition to the very generous support it provided in serving as host for the World Conference in Yokohama, Japan has demonstrated leadership in the region by supporting the objectives of the Decade through numerous programmes. For example, a recent initiative of the Decade secretariat, with Japanese support, is the RADIUS workshop, "Risk Assessment and Diagnosis of Urban Areas against Seismic Disasters", to be held in Jakarta in June 1995. It will focus on key earthquake disaster reduction issues for urban areas in developing countries, and will chart a plan of action.

18. A common strategy for disaster reduction that served as the basis for the development of disaster-reduction projects and activities in the region was presented to the Yokohama Conference by 15 Pacific island countries. In September 1994, the Third Regional Disaster Reduction Meeting was held in Suva, Fiji, to further regional coordination on policy issues, training needs and information requirements. At that meeting, consensus was reached on the establishment of a Disaster Management Unit within the Pacific Forum Secretariat for coordination of disaster-reduction programmes. The South Pacific Programme Office of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs was requested to provide necessary liaison and technical support for effective regional coordination.

19. The South Pacific Programme Office is also the implementing agency for the jointly funded UNDP/DHA South Pacific Disaster Reduction Project, one of the major regional activities that supports the common Pacific disaster-reduction strategy. This project provides coordination of multiple donor inputs for training at the country level, and assists in the establishment of a sustainable mechanism for regional cooperation in disaster reduction. The Australian Committee for the Decade, in addition to its own active domestic programme, has been a major provider of technical and financial support for these formative activities in the Pacific.

3. Latin America and the Caribbean

20. Various Latin American countries have learned from previous disasters by establishing nationwide programmes in disaster awareness and preparedness, and by the development of related management capabilities. Extensive and frequent contacts have been established between numerous organizations. Geographical affinities and shared concerns about specific types of hazards have also enabled regional organizations to collaborate in support of individual national

programmes. This is being done through shared training, the exchange of practical knowledge or experience, and collaborative efforts to develop information materials. A strong and cohesive regional identity has contributed to the establishment of effective regionwide disaster-reduction programmes for the mutual benefit of member countries.

21. The following organizations have been particularly active in the field of disaster reduction in Latin America by emphasizing the importance of the Decade: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Organization of American States (OAS); Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC); and Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) has been a major contributor to regional motivation and services for disaster reduction in the Caribbean.

22. The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction has facilitated regional relationships, responding to the interests of individual disaster-prone countries. Activities have been identified, and intraregional resources have been engaged with the assistance of a Regional Programme Office in Costa Rica. It maintains steady contacts throughout the region, and works closely with the Pan American Health Organization and other regional organizations and national offices. The Office is particularly active in the encouragement of training and other forms of formal education, and has thus contributed to the implementation of the objectives of the Decade at the community level.

23. Similarly, the Regional Programme Office of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, in Quito, Ecuador, also promotes disaster-reduction initiatives at the national and regional levels. The Programme Officer of this Regional Programme Office provides backstopping and technical support to ongoing national disaster-mitigation activities in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, which are being assisted by the Disaster Reduction Division of the Department.

24. An important regional event relating to the Decade was the International Conference on Natural Disasters, organized by the Government of Peru, at Huarez, Peru, in May 1995. Leading disaster-reduction professionals conducted an assessment of regional activities already completed and identified future requirements.

4. Eastern and central European States

25. In the Russian Federation and in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), several important initiatives in disaster reduction are being implemented following the World Conference, including the definition of projects for strengthening disaster-management capacities, mitigation and planning. These projects will be implemented jointly by UNDP and the Disaster Reduction Division of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs within the framework of their technical cooperation activities. Changes in the economic environment have spurred a strong interest in the role that insurance can play in reducing disaster risk. Training seminars are currently being organized by government officials, in cooperation with the Disaster Reduction Division,

within the framework of the Decade, to be followed by an international conference later in 1995.

26. Aware of the threats posed by technological and natural disasters and of the importance of developing further capacities in the region to deal with these threats, the secretariat of the Decade is participating regularly in meetings of the Inter-State Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States for Disaster Relief and Coordination, which was formed at the time of the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction. Several initiatives are under way in order to develop disaster-training institutions, including those in seismic resistant construction and disaster medicine.

5. Western European and other States

27. Recent major disasters such as the floods in western Europe, the Kobe earthquake in Japan, wildfire in Australia, and floods and the Northridge earthquake in the United States highlight the importance of strong national commitment to disaster-reduction policies and practices. The industrialized countries are paying significantly greater attention to detailed damage analysis and post-disaster evaluation, given the high capital costs of reconstruction. In many of these countries, disasters have vividly demonstrated the influence of human activities and behaviour patterns on disaster vulnerability. A combination of natural, human and technological factors increases the potential for damage.

28. The national committees for the Decade and related technical agencies of the industrialized countries have remained active in the respective countries and have pursued a variety of collaborative relationships with neighbouring countries, and supported disaster-reduction initiatives in developing countries.

29. An example is provided by the collective efforts of the European Union in the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Programme of the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO). Under the first phase of the programme, 15 projects are currently being implemented at the national and regional levels in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In addition, ECHO has supported and organized several international workshops addressing issues related to the Decade. Assistance has been extended to the secretariat of the Decade by European institutions and experts to strengthen management and coordination capacities. A second example is provided by the Council of Europe. Within the framework of the Major Hazards Agreement, the Council has furthered collaboration with the secretariat of the Decade and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the development of scientific networks for disaster reduction.

30. Canada, the United States and Mexico are also building up collaborative relationships in disaster reduction. The national committees for the Decade of these three countries held a workshop early in 1995 to identify possibilities for joint activities.

31. Following an initiative by Canada, the collaborating partners are responding to a recent proposal of the Group of Seven relating to information and communication technologies for early-warning and disaster-reduction

purposes. The secretariat of the Decade is working with partners in those countries to ensure that the opportunity provided by the initiative to advance cooperation in the important sector of technology and applied science is realized.

B. United Nations system

32. A number of agencies and organizations of the United Nations system have reported to the secretariat of the Decade on their activities since the World Conference. This information is provided in a separate information report prepared by the secretariat and covers the United Nations (including the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the Department of Public Information, ECA, the Economic Commission for Europe, ECLAC, ESCAP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNDP, the United Nations Volunteers, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNESCO, WHO, the International Telecommunication Union, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

33. The agencies and organizations of the United Nations system are increasingly aware of the importance of including disaster reduction in their respective development and environmental protection programmes. The interest and foresight of a number of these agencies was demonstrated by their roles in organizing technical sessions at the World Conference, and in circulating the results widely. The following examples demonstrate how recent policy efforts among some United Nations bodies have been influential in furthering disaster-reduction interest and programming. This development has been facilitated by the expressed support for disaster-reduction concerns voiced in the respective governing bodies.

34. Three WHO Regional Committees included emergency preparedness on their agendas during 1994. The Pan American Health Organization has intensified its long-standing programme commitment to disaster preparedness and prevention in the Latin American region. In 1995, both the WHO Executive Board and the World Health Assembly adopted resolutions that, inter alia, dealt with emergency preparedness and disaster reduction.

35. The World Meteorological Organization reaffirmed the Organization's strong support for the Decade during the 1994 WMO Executive Council, which was held immediately after the Yokohama Conference. Progress was reported in the implementation of the WMO Plan of Action for the Decade, involving both the Organization's regular programmes and additional special projects. In a scheduled review, the Twelfth WMO Congress, held from 30 May to 21 June 1995, would consider the WMO Plan of Action for the Decade, originally adopted during the Eleventh Congress, in 1991, taking into account the developments and needs of the past four years.

36. Strong interest and support for the Decade has also been demonstrated by UNESCO, the Executive Board of which has endorsed the Yokohama Strategy and the Plan of Action. The Organization has accelerated and further expanded the implementation of an existing programme related to studying the mitigation possibilities of different natural hazards. There is also great appreciation within UNESCO of the importance of integrating natural hazard concerns into interdisciplinary projects related to the environment, urban issues and small island coastal zone development.

37. Since the inception of the Decade, the active participation of the United Nations development agencies and organizations and their field staff has been indispensable for achieving the goals and objectives of the Decade. United Nations Resident Coordinators continue to make a key contribution by providing impetus for the development of national efforts in disaster reduction.

38. As the principal organization within the United Nations system responsible for development cooperation, UNDP plays a major role in this regard. In several countries, notably in Asia and the Pacific, disaster reduction has been emphasized in the current UNDP programming cycle, largely in response to requests from national authorities. Representatives of UNICEF have been encouraged to incorporate disaster-reduction elements in their programmes in disaster-prone areas.

39. The Disaster Management Training Programme, implemented jointly by UNDP and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs with broad inter-agency participation, has spurred local initiatives in this respect. Recently, it successfully completed the first phase of a strategic process for disaster management, coordination and reduction, at various levels, in 55 countries. The Programme has involved development and disaster-prevention professionals within the United Nations system, and from among national officers of government agencies, in a common quest for appropriate measures for preparedness and to raise disaster awareness. Participants have both drawn upon, and further extended, their respective professional abilities through collaboration in programmes that have been implemented in their various countries.

40. Both the World Conference and the mid-term review of the Decade have strongly confirmed the importance of integrating disaster reduction into the national development planning process if sustainable development is to be achieved. Development agencies and financial institutions have assisted in conceptualizing the interrelationships between sustainable development, environmental protection and disaster reduction. At the same time, it is widely felt that there is a need for a better balance between immediate disaster requirements and longer-term developmental interests. As expressed in the report of the Secretary-General on an agenda for development (A/49/665), preventive and curative forms of development are complementary dimensions, applicable to both man-made and natural disasters.

C. Scientific and technical organizations

41. As the initial conceptualizers of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the scientific, technical and professional organizations remain a major resource for the Decade, especially as their ranks are expanded to include additional professional disciplines. In recognition of the value of interdisciplinary action, and responding to suggestions made at the World Conference, the Decade secretariat has initiated a project that addresses the difficult challenges connected with the protection of mega-cities and their infrastructure from natural hazards. At the same time, the secretariat has compiled case-studies that demonstrate the economic benefits of disaster reduction. Another activity seeks to facilitate consideration of disaster-related issues in the identification, formulation and implementation of development projects. The secretariat is also planning to review different examples of disaster legislation in an attempt to produce guidelines for wider circulation, as part of its resource material.

42. The role of the scientific and technical community has been particularly relevant to developing institutional networks, as well as addressing socio-economic and legal aspects of disaster reduction. Such networks, comprising policy makers and technical institutions alike, are being developed with the participation of leading scientific and technical organizations, and in association with UNESCO and other interested United Nations agencies and intergovernmental bodies. Interest has also been expressed by a number of universities to establish collaborative relationships in the fields of applied science and research. Similar synergy will be achieved through the establishment of networks of interdisciplinary cooperation between developing and developed countries.

43. Within the framework of the Decade, the following major scientific and technical associations continue to be engaged in important disaster-reduction endeavours: International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), Union of International Technical Associations (UITA), World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO), European Earthquake Engineers (EEE) and International Institute of Communications (IIC).

44. Further information on the current activities and planned initiatives of scientific and technical organizations is included in the information report prepared by the Decade secretariat.

D. Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

45. A number of global and regional organizations, from the public and private sectors, and non-governmental organizations have reported on their disaster-reduction activities. These include the International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO), the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Further information on specific activities is included in the report prepared by the secretariat of the Decade.

E. Department of Humanitarian Affairs

46. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs has incorporated the functions of the Disaster Mitigation Branch and the Decade secretariat in its recently established Disaster Reduction Division, while retaining the identity of the secretariat within the Decade framework. The orientation of the Division's work is influenced by the Yokohama Strategy and the Plan of Action, which is reflected in the Division's own action plan for 1995. In its early stages of implementation, the merger has demonstrated the value of providing one management structure for distinctive but complementary functions essential to realizing the goals of the Decade.

47. The secretariat concentrates on coordinating the implementation of the Decade's resolutions by the international community, participating member States and partner organizations, while the technical staff of the Disaster Reduction Division continue to provide technical support to regional and national initiatives for disaster reduction. This arrangement has provided the opportunity to harness the application of specific types of technical support of the Department to further the Decade's policy objectives. In addition, there are other professional capacities in the Department, such as training and operational preparedness expertise, which can contribute to the goals of disaster reduction and, thus, of the Decade.

48. An annual action plan for the Disaster Reduction Division, prepared in January 1995, translates expressed Decade policy intentions into an operational scheme of increased capacity. It also provides a time-frame for specific annual work plans, which include designated professional responsibilities and clearly defined targets. The primary activities of the Division include the following:

(a) Information management and early-warning systems (including a network of organizational relationships);

(b) Public information and promotion of disaster reduction;

(c) Programme analysis and applications (with case-study and experience transfer, through institutional liaison);

(d) Technical support for policy commitment and disaster-mitigation practice at the regional and country levels;

(e) International policy coordination for the Decade and secretariat management;

(f) Resource mobilization for the Trust Fund for the Decade.

49. The establishment of the Division has provided the opportunity for a strengthened programme framework. It must be stressed, however, that provision of the necessary support for the full realization of the practical results anticipated by the Yokohama Strategy and the Plan of Action is dependent upon the availability of adequate professional capacity and financial resources.

III. FRAMEWORK OF ACTION FOR THE DECADE

50. The General Assembly, in resolution 44/236, by which the Decade was proclaimed, requested the Secretary-General to establish organizational arrangements to implement the resolution. They were, namely, the Special High-Level Council, the Scientific and Technical Committee and the secretariat of the Decade. The United Nations Steering Committee for the Decade was established to coordinate the many tasks given to the United Nations system under the resolution. Those bodies have since been augmented by the formation of a contact group in Geneva (see paras. 56-57) and national committees or focal points in participating countries.

A. Special High-Level Council

51. The Council has completed its work for the first half of the Decade. For the second half of the Decade, the General Assembly, in resolution 49/22 A, invited the Secretary-General to strengthen the Council by revising its objectives, functions and composition. It is anticipated that a reconstituted Council will provide guidance for motivating adequate levels of engagement and political support to ensure disaster reduction in the twenty-first century. In that role, the Council will complement the predominantly technical and programmatic emphasis of the Scientific and Technical Committee.

52. During the remaining part of the Decade, the reconstituted Council is expected to support the strategic planning towards building longer-term capacities for concerted international action. It will also play an important supportive role in preparing for the conference at the end of the Decade, which is to enhance international arrangements to sustain disaster-reduction interests into the twenty-first century. Towards these ends, the reconstituted Council should include members who are recognized internationally for their accomplishments in the fields of public policy, economics, financial affairs and managerial or commercial endeavours. The members should also have demonstrated personal dedication to disaster reduction, internationally or within their own communities.

B. Scientific and Technical Committee

53. The Committee continues to function as the professional advisory body of the Decade, and was commended by the General Assembly, in resolution 49/22 A, for its efforts. The Committee met during the World Conference, and gathered for its sixth substantive meeting, in Washington, D.C., from 27 February to 3 March 1995. The Committee was invited to Washington by the United States national committee for the Decade. The National Academy of Sciences served as host for the meeting, which was co-sponsored by several government agencies.

54. During the meeting, in response to the guidelines provided by the World Conference in the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action, the Committee concentrated on a limited number of strategic issues deemed essential to the implementation of Decade activities in the future. These included the establishment of a programme framework that would translate into action the

Decade's emphasis on implementation through national, regional and global strategies, with particular support to national committees and authorities. Early warning and information systems were also covered, as were public information and promotional activities.

55. The Committee's recommendations and conclusions on these important subjects have been made available by the Decade secretariat as an information report.

C. Contact Group of Permanent Missions

56. The Contact Group is an open-ended group of countries and United Nations agencies, established at the initiative of Member States and participating institutions. It has proved to be a useful informal arrangement for both industrialized and developing countries to maintain dialogue and plan initiatives between the Decade secretariat and primary collaborators. At its first meeting after the World Conference, the Group emphasized that its main task was to assist the secretariat in carrying out tasks derived from the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action, as well as in providing guidance for their implementation at the national and local levels. The Contact Group was convened three times in the autumn of 1994 and twice in the first half of 1995.

57. A smaller core group of representatives and alternates of the Permanent Missions from each of the five geographic regions has met, on a regular basis, twice a month to discuss a number of priority issues in support of Decade activities. The core group provides general advice, based on liaison and information exchange with the larger regional groupings of Permanent Missions both in Geneva and in New York.

D. National committees and country focal points

58. The national committees and country focal points play an important role in local coordination and the mobilization of activities. There is, however, considerable variation in individual committees' capacities and degree of involvement in disaster-reduction efforts. More than 90 countries succeeded in preparing national documentation for the World Conference. There is considerable potential for engaging a broader range of partners at the local level. Attention must be paid to sustain organizational interest and follow-up activities.

59. With the intensification of disaster-reduction activities at the national level, there is a corresponding need for the secretariat to increase its own efforts to liaise regularly with national committees and related authorities and to maintain a regular and informed relationship with authorities, organizations and individual professionals working in the national context. National initiatives and accomplishments should be tracked in order to exploit their cumulative effects, and enable the secretariat to be aware of prevailing technical or information requirements.

60. Where still non-existent, national committees or similar focal points of activity should continue to be developed by proactive secretariat support in

order to sustain motivation, initiative and the broadest possible cooperation at all levels within the international community.

E. Working Group of the United Nations Steering Committee for the Decade

61. The Working Group has continued to be a useful vehicle for the coordination of Decade-related activities among the concerned agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, as well as among major international scientific institutions and organizations. The Working Group convened several times in 1994 after the World Conference to develop a concerted, action-oriented collaborative follow-up programme.

62. The Working Group has continued to meet periodically during the first half of 1995 to discuss participants' activities and reporting on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 49/22 A and 49/22 B. A meeting in March 1995 was dedicated to initiating a consolidated assessment of the system's early-warning capabilities for natural disasters and similar disasters with an adverse impact on the environment.

63. In line with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/22 A, the Secretary-General has undertaken an initial review of the United Nations Steering Committee for the Decade and has extended its mandate until the end of the Decade under the authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

F. Secretariat of the Decade

1. Management and coordination

64. The General Assembly, in resolution 49/22 A, stressed the necessity of bringing the operational and promotional efforts of disaster reduction closer together. The incorporation of the activities of the secretariat of the Decade and the Disaster Mitigation Branch in the Disaster Reduction Division of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, at Geneva (see para. 46) is in line with that objective.

65. The outcome of the Yokohama Conference emphasized the need for strong political commitment if practical and technical measures of disaster reduction were to be integrated effectively in a larger community of interests. The Director of the Decade secretariat has recently been designated Task Manager, representing the Department of Humanitarian Affairs for natural disasters, within the framework of the Commission for Sustainable Development. The duties include reporting to the Commission on follow-up activities of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. This function is an example of the growing relevance of disaster reduction within broader development frameworks.

66. *The temporary nature of the Decade and its secretariat notwithstanding,* a unified management structure in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs for

disaster reduction remains an important, pressing requirement. The goals of the Decade and related resolutions of the General Assembly call for sustained motivational and coordinating capacities for disaster reduction within the United Nations system by the year 2000. Within the United Nations itself, efforts need to go beyond the technical abilities available in the Department and an exclusive reliance on extrabudgetary support for the activities of the Decade secretariat. As disaster reduction is increasingly reflected in national development policy, the demands placed on the Department in this area are likely to grow.

67. Resource mobilization for disaster reduction needs to be actively promoted alongside emergency relief concerns. In the case of the Decade secretariat, which forms the core of the Disaster Reduction Division, the Scientific and Technical Committee, in the conclusions of its recent meeting in Washington, D.C., stressed that the Decade secretariat must be stable and strong enough to devise means to motivate various agencies and collaborating partners and called for it to be accorded demonstrable evidence of policy, resource and qualified staffing support.

2. Information management and early-warning systems

68. Recognizing the importance of information management and early warning for disaster reduction, the Decade secretariat has embarked on several related initiatives. As a follow-up to the World Conference, regional strategies for improved dissemination of disaster-reduction experience have developed with the support of regional organizations. Those initiatives are discussed in the twenty-second issue of the STOP Disasters magazine of November 1994.

69. The Decade secretariat has worked closely with several collaborating partners to explore appropriate technology and communications practices that would facilitate the flow of information at all levels. One such effort has sought to assemble a working group of information providers and users in order to design and establish an international disaster information resource network. A prototype is being developed under the name "HazardNet", with emphasis on practical utility and accessibility for potential users. This activity builds on previous efforts to provide access to a wide range of resources and programme materials for disaster managers and other concerned target groups.

70. Another related system, the Emergency Preparedness Information Exchange Project (EPIX), has become an essential part of the Decade activities. This computer-based, emergency management information system is primarily a tool for the regular exchange of information in support of integrated disaster mitigation. It has gone on-line since the World Conference, and has become the secretariat's server on the Internet for promoting Decade activities and collaboration.

71. Early-warning systems are of particular relevance for disaster-related information management and communications. The General Assembly, in resolution 49/22 B, requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its fiftieth session on the early-warning capacities of the United Nations system and to make recommendations on how they might be improved and better coordinated. It also

called for concrete proposals on how the transfer of technology related to early warning could be facilitated, particularly to developing countries.

72. The Decade secretariat is currently coordinating a comprehensive identification and review of existing early-warning systems for natural disasters and similar disasters with an adverse effect on the environment. The exercise presents an excellent opportunity for inter-agency collaboration and cooperation with relevant partners outside the United Nations system. The secretariat is conscious of the essential linkages between the improvement of the international warning system and its local application.

3. Promotional activities

73. Since the World Conference, promotional activities have included the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction, on 12 October 1994, which focused on vulnerable communities. Information material, including in particular material relating to the Conference, was distributed widely to national committees for the Decade, community and non-governmental organizations and other collaborating partners within and outside the United Nations system.

74. Preparations are under way for the 1995 International Day, with the chosen theme "Women and children - key to prevention". Advance promotional activities and documentation have been made possible by a contribution from the city of Yokohama, which it extended for that purpose during the World Conference.

75. The magazine STOP Disasters continues to be a popular medium for the international circulation of disaster-reduction information. The format has recently been revised in order to provide more space for local, national and regional reporting. By mid-1995, a total of 24 issues had been circulated in 17,000 copies for issue in four languages. There are some 14,000 subscribers in 192 countries. The Russian Federation national committee for the Decade circulates an abridged Russian version throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Chinese national committee produces a Chinese version. Another Decade publication is the IDNDR News, published quarterly in English and Spanish for more than 10,000 people by the regional project for Latin America and the Caribbean.

76. Other promotional activities include the preparation of a standard information kit to facilitate the dissemination of substantive information about the Decade. Specific articles have been prepared and placed in topical publications and circulated at selected international conferences such as the recent World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen.

77. The Yokohama Message, Strategy and Plan of Action were widely circulated in a special issue of STOP Disasters in July-August 1994. Since then, a special publication of the World Conference conclusions has been produced with a preface and a design intended to make the contents more accessible. Fifteen thousand copies in three languages are being circulated to national focal points and disaster-reduction professionals, including selected media outlets. Professional contacts and public information officers of United Nations agencies and all UNDP field offices have received the document.

4. Demonstration projects

78. Demonstration projects represent a long-standing form of Decade activity, designed to promote disaster reduction with professional and official audiences as well as scientific and technical communities and key United Nations agencies. Forty demonstration projects and international Decade projects were selected to provide examples of practical measures for disaster reduction being applied in various fields and different countries. The projects' aim is to promote the application of available technologies and to exchange know-how, particularly among developing countries.

79. The secretariat and a subcommittee of the Scientific and Technical Committee have continued to monitor the implementation of these and other demonstration projects. Most projects have made satisfactory progress, and a number of them are now nearing completion. The mobilization of resources for implementing some projects, and the identification of means for a wider dissemination of the knowledge gained to local practitioners, however, remain problematic in some cases.

80. An illustrative project, implemented by the World Federation of Engineering Organizations promotes the strengthening of structures to withstand wind and seismic hazards. Its research programme has been completed and material for a technical manual is now being compiled. Another project has promoted techniques to reinforce existing structures by simple, practical means, and manuals have been published to guide local contractors working in the developing world. Annotated bibliographies have also been compiled and circulated for use by local experts. Materials from both projects will receive wide distribution and have been used in a workshop coordinated by the Decade secretariat on earthquake disaster reduction in urban areas of developing countries, which took place in Jakarta in June 1995.

81. As the range of professional expertise committed to disaster reduction increases, future demonstration activities will, equally, provide a wider perspective of professional experience. They will integrate various fields of activities that have thus far remained outside the primary focus of the project orientation of the Decade, such as social sciences, economics, urban and regional planning, and public administration. As current projects approach completion, the Decade secretariat and the Scientific and Technical Committee will encourage implementing organizations to report on experiences and disseminate knowledge as widely as possible. The same approach will be applied to new demonstration activities brought to the attention of the Decade secretariat. A status report on the progress of all current demonstration projects since the World Conference is included in the information report prepared by the secretariat.

5. Trust Fund for the Decade

82. The Trust Fund was established to receive voluntary contributions from Governments, international organizations and other sources for the implementation of the Decade's goals. It has, however, remained an under-funded

facility, barely able to support essential functions of the Decade Framework of Action and the secretariat. Its capacity to provide substantial support for disaster-reduction projects continues to be extremely limited.

83. In 1994, voluntary contributions were made by Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Asian Development Bank and the European Union (European Community Humanitarian Office), either directly or through the Trust Fund, to prepare for, and bring participants to, the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction. A major objective was to ensure broad cross-sectoral participation from developing countries in Yokohama. The Government of Japan, having covered the additional costs of convening the World Conference at Yokohama, agreed that savings made, could be retained in the Trust Fund to, inter-alia, finance a project on earthquake reduction in mega-cities.

84. More recently, the United States National Academy of Sciences and several federal agencies, as well as the Organization of American States, PAHO/WHO and the Government of Switzerland, provided support for convening the sixth session of the Scientific and Technical Committee in Washington, D.C. in February 1995.

85. Since the World Conference, contributions have been received from Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the European Union (ECHO) and the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency for the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action. A project proposal is currently being considered by Italy. In addition, contributions in kind continue to be provided by Japan in the form of an expert and a junior professional officer. Sweden covers the costs of an associate expert in the Latin American and Caribbean region, while PAHO/WHO provides facilities and secretarial support. France has also provided contributions in kind through a seminar on risk prevention conducted in Guadeloupe for States, organizations and specialized institutions, in the Central American and Caribbean region.

86. The level of contributions to the Trust Fund is not sufficient, however, to support the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action to the extent necessary. Also, the flow of contributions continues to be irregular, prohibiting serious planning and hampering Decade activities.

87. The Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action recommended that the General Assembly include the costs of a core Decade secretariat in the United Nations regular budget. To lift the continuing constraints resulting from limited resources at least partially, several other steps may also be considered:

(a) A percentage of extrabudgetary contributions to disaster relief funds to be earmarked systematically for disaster-prevention programmes;

(b) Unspent balances of voluntary contributions for specific relief programmes to be made available, after completion of the relief activities, for disaster-reduction projects in the affected country as part of rehabilitation and reconstruction;

(c) Voluntary contributions from development funds to be made available for specific disaster-reduction projects;

(d) Technical support and resources and project personnel to be provided as in-kind contributions for collaborative disaster-reduction activities at the country level;

(e) Secondment of expert staff to the Decade secretariat to be enhanced in line with the recommendations for the establishment of the Decade Framework of Action.

IV. PROGRAMME FOR THE PERIOD 1995-2000

88. The World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction confirmed the validity of the concept and the continuing potential of the Decade to reach its objectives. At the same time, not all opportunities could be used to their full potential during the first half of the Decade. Consequently, a number of Decade objectives will now have to be fulfilled during the remaining four years, if success is to be ensured. The following sections attempt, therefore, to define the principal components of a coherently structured, yet flexible outline of activities and organizational arrangements.

A. Policy orientation

89. The policy orientation of the Decade is changing with a widespread acknowledgement of the significance of the impact of disasters on development and of the necessity to act in advance of disasters. Chapters 17 and 18 of Agenda 21, 4/ chapter II of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, 5/ and paragraph 81 of the report of the Secretary-General on an agenda for development (A/49/665) link the implementation of disaster-reduction activities with progress in development.

90. The Decade is at a crossroads and has to focus attention on what can and must be accomplished in concrete terms. This requires a shift of emphasis from predominantly promotional aspects of disaster reduction, which was the main focus of activities before the World Conference, to a much greater commitment to the practical implementation of disaster-reduction measures.

91. The initial achievements of the Decade have encouraged interest, and have highlighted the needs of disaster-prone countries. The Decade's mechanisms should be enabled to respond with practical initiatives to these needs. Failure to do so can jeopardize both momentum and credibility. Neglecting opportunities in disaster reduction may compromise, in the long run, the survival of communities at risk.

92. The guarantee of safety in the future, the "global culture of prevention", now depends on what the international community can accomplish in the next four years.

B. Objective

93. The objective of the Decade remains, as originally stated, "to reduce through concerted international action, especially in developing countries, the loss of life, property damage and social and economic disruption caused by natural disasters". A programme for implementation has been prepared based on a focused management approach that should ensure tangible results in disaster reduction between 1995 and 2000.

C. Targets

94. The targets of the programme remain as set for the Decade by the Scientific and Technical Committee and as confirmed by the General Assembly. By the year 2000, countries should have the following as part of their plans to achieve sustainable development:

(a) Comprehensive national assessments of risks from natural hazards, integrated into development plans;

(b) Mitigation plans at the national and/or local levels that address long-term prevention, preparedness, and community awareness;

(c) Ready access to global, regional, national and local warning systems.

A related essential target calls for effective coordination mechanisms to be in place at the conclusion of the Decade for sustained implementation of disaster reduction at all levels.

D. Strategy

95. The strategy to achieve the objective and targets of the Decade stems from the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action. It addresses the following issues with priority:

(a) Gaining widespread recognition for disaster reduction as a part of the development process;

(b) Mobilizing political commitment and the allocation of resources as prerequisites for the implementation of disaster reduction programmes and activities;

(c) Engaging in integrated implementation processes that comprise hazard and vulnerability assessment, as well as technical and structural measures, with due consideration for disaster reduction in public policy;

(d) Coordinating effective information exchange between Decade partners, for the widest possible audience;

(e) Establishing a stable management capacity for the purpose of mobilizing, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating disaster reduction activities during the second half of the Decade.

E. Action plan

96. Four areas are identified for core activities to further disaster reduction. They will sustain the momentum generated by the World Conference towards the end of the Decade and beyond. The activities will have to draw on a variety of professional abilities in diverse fields. The principal areas for action, and the activities included therein, relate to the major components of chapter III. They have been conceived in a way that reflects the shift of emphasis to practical application of disaster reduction at the national level.

1. Development of national capacities

97. Tasks to be accomplished range from the generation of political commitment at national or local levels to the practical assessment of hazards or vulnerabilities that can be addressed. There is a need to develop locally appropriate disaster-reduction strategies which determine priorities and assign functional responsibilities. Managerial and technical abilities, or other forms of specialized knowledge, are needed for implementation. The process depends on the effective coordination of interdisciplinary abilities identifying and using existing institutional relationships. Access to country-specific and technical types of information is necessary at all levels of implementation. A significant measure of success is the incorporation, and funding, of national disaster-reduction strategies in national development plans or budgetary cycles.

2. Application of knowledge and technology

98. Activities will concentrate on identifying key technical experience or specialist knowledge and the appropriate means for them to be applied in actual human experience and social systems that provide effective disaster reduction. For example, the effectiveness of early-warning systems is enhanced through improved access to available technology and data in a manner that contributes to the implementation of timely preparedness actions. Disaster resistant construction technologies and engineering concepts need to become standard practice among contractors working within economic constraints in local communities. Due consideration will be given to indigenous, traditional expertise.

99. The secretariat of the Decade will continue to foster the dissemination of knowledge about existing technical and specialist resources, and facilitate access for their potential users. Networking between institutions and programme activities will be developed and supported for that purpose. Training will continue to be an important tool for motivating people to adopt new methods or to share existing expertise in the field of prevention, preparedness and mitigation. The expansion of interdisciplinary relationships and the

promotion of cross-sectoral coalitions of related interests will increase the opportunities for transferring knowledge and technology for the mutual benefit of all Decade participants.

3. Information management, public information and promotion

100. Ability to obtain, circulate and use information at all operational levels of Decade activities is critical to its success. Attention needs to be focused on identifying the important actors and then determining their specific information requirements. Equally important is a sound assessment of sources of information. New and productive organizational and operational relationships can be developed through exchange of information. Mechanisms that increase access to information and facilitate their use expand the scope of applied disaster reduction and increase the range of participants. Tasks will include the further development of global, regional, comprehensive and sectoral network systems.

101. A promotional dimension will be maintained in the activities of the Decade. It is essential, however, to shift from a general marketing of the philosophy of the Decade to providing widespread understanding of the feasibility of disaster reduction on the basis of concrete experiences. The effectiveness of public information and promotion depends on identifying key recipients and targeting them with appropriate information, in order to motivate their interest and mobilize active participation. The successful achievement of the Decade's objectives depends on the extent to which the right information is put in the hands of the right people - to understand, to decide, to motivate, to implement and to share knowledge.

4. International collaboration

102. The established International Framework of Action for the Decade will continue to be the prime catalytic mechanism for promotion and implementation. The Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action provides additional emphasis on concrete disaster reduction activities, conducted in a concerted, cross-sectoral manner, at all levels. As outlined earlier, wider participatory access to the Framework of Action will be solicited and the effectiveness of its individual components will be raised.

103. An additional dimension of international cooperation is being introduced in response to the request of the General Assembly, in its resolution 49/22 A, for initial recommendations for a second world conference not later than the year 2000. This conference should take stock of the achievements of the Decade, and provide a basis for structured and sustained disaster reduction into the twenty-first century.

104. If that ambitious goal is to be achieved, the preparations for the event at the end of the Decade cannot be limited to an administrative and organizational approach. The conference should be the final event of a process, over the next four years, which arranges for continuous interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral interaction of all partners in the Decade. The conference should not be an end

in itself, but a landmark that will focus international cooperation on ensuring a safer world in the year 2000 and beyond.

105. Based on the endorsement of the proposals outlined in the present report, the organization of the conference should start without delay. A preparatory committee should be established and its composition and terms of reference determined. The success of the World Conference in Yokohama confirms the value of the multidisciplinary approach employed there.

106. In order to provide adequate substantive and secretarial support for the process, for the work of the preparatory committee and for the conference itself, the Decade secretariat will serve as the conference secretariat as was the case for the Yokohama Conference.

F. Time-frame

107. The programme's funding and commitments need to be agreed. Annual plans can set forth in detail a work programme, including target achievements such as the following:

(a) 1995 - Year of conceptualization and confirmation

(i) Finalize plan process and planning responsibilities;

(ii) Confirm policy and financial commitment of member States;

(iii) Engage primary collaborators and supporters;

(iv) Arrive at agreement of interests and implementation roles within the United Nations;

(v) Initiate regional plan development, emphasis and institutions;

(b) 1996 - Year of engagement

(i) Organize programme-management responsibilities;

(ii) Identify and engage regional implementation institutions;

(iii) Reconstitute Special High-Level Council;

(iv) Implement specific work programmes in regions and countries;

(v) Identify and develop supporting institutional relationships;

(vi) Prepare agenda and preparatory process of conference event;

(c) 1997 - Year of concentration

(i) Concentrate on implementation of activities in countries;

(ii) Consolidate sectoral, geographical implementation networks;

(iii) Initiate development funding process for future sustainability;

(iv) Concentrate on conference operational responsibilities and resources;

(d) 1998 - Year of assessment and refinement

(i) Assess country and regional developments;

(ii) Assess institutional and collaborator involvement;

(iii) Synthesize disaster-reduction achievements and plan presentations;

(iv) Refine areas of emphasis and redirect attention, as necessary;

(v) Formulate future feasibility of coordination mechanisms;

(vi) Review specific regional, sectoral and special-interest achievements and translate into contributions for forum;

(e) 1999 - Year of consolidation

(i) Report progress, achievements and future commitments;

(ii) Conduct forum to compile results, give wider circulation to existing resources and organizational capabilities and recognize permanent capacities for coordination of disaster reduction;

(iii) Confirm and install funding modalities for sustained attention;

(f) 2000 - Year of accomplishment

(i) Evidence of risk reduction in national planning;

(ii) Established regional, technical, sectoral coordination;

(iii) Engagement of international capacities, mechanisms for sustained disaster reduction;

(iv) Critical assessment of results of the Decade;

(v) International sustained financial commitments;

(vi) International mechanisms for coordination.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

108. The following conclusions and recommendations are submitted for consideration:

(a) It is recommended that the strategic approach and the related action plan for the second half of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction outlined in the present report be endorsed as a means to achieve the required shift from promotion to practical application. This approach and the plan of action are to ensure the achievement by the year 2000 of sustained disaster reduction, firmly integrated in national planning;

(b) The appeal for an adequate provision of resources within the Decade's framework of activities should be reiterated. Resources should be deployed for bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation, as well as for the exchange of technology and the facilitation of access to existing knowledge and expertise. The Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, in particular the Decade secretariat, must be enabled to execute the challenging tasks successfully through adequate financial support;

(c) It is recommended that all partners in the Decade support and participate actively in efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Framework of Action for the Decade on the basis of the proposals advocated in the present report;

(d) The above proposals for the preparatory process for the second world conference on natural disaster reduction are recommended for endorsement by the Economic and Social Council.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, Yokohama, 23-27 May 1994 (A/CONF.172/9 and Add.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

2/ Ibid., annex II.

3/ Ibid., chaps. IV and V.

4/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

5/ Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, 25 April-6 May 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1995/75
26 May 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Substantive session of 1995
Geneva, 26 June-28 July 1995
Item 6 (k) of the provisional agenda*

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS: WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Effective mobilization and integration of women in development: gender issues in macroeconomic policy-making and development planning

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION	1 - 6	2
I. GENDER-RESPONSIVE DEVELOPMENT: A NEW APPROACH	7 - 10	3
II. IMPACT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON WOMEN	11 - 22	4
A. Scope and methods of analysis	12 - 14	4
B. Gender issues in economic policy	15 - 22	5
III. CONCLUSIONS: STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	23	6

* E/1995/100.

95-18884 (E) 100795 120795

INTRODUCTION

1. Reports on the effective mobilization of women in development have been submitted to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on a biennial basis for a number of years, starting at its forty-second session.

2. In resolution 42/178, the General Assembly recognized the importance of the contribution of women to the overall economy and called, inter alia, for an intensification of efforts to promote the integration of women in development and the involvement of women, both as agents and as beneficiaries, in national development plans. It also urged Governments to review the impact on women of development policies and programmes. Subsequent reports have emphasized coordination of the activities of organizations of the United Nations system in women in development (A/44/290-E/1989/105), the effective mobilization of women in the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade (A/46/464) and how gender was dealt with in Agenda 21 1/ (A/49/393).

3. The 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development 2/ analysed changes in the role of women in development in the context of global economic restructuring, focusing, among other issues, on the impact of development policies on women. The second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in its analysis of factors affecting the implementation of the Strategies, considered a broad range of macroeconomic and international trade polices and their impact on the economic and social status of women.

4. Accordingly, building on the work already undertaken, the present report, the fourth of the biennial reports on the effective mobilization and integration of women in development, focuses on gender issues in macroeconomic policy-making and development planning. The choice of this theme reflects the growing recognition in academic circles and among development practitioners of the need to consider gender as a variable in the design of economic policies if their implementation is to produce an outcome that is both efficient and socially desirable.

5. The need for the explicit incorporation of gender issues in the design of economic policies, particularly policies of structural adjustment, has frequently been emphasized in the context of expert group meetings organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women, Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, United Nations Secretariat, and by various international development institutions. 3/ It will therefore be useful to identify the areas of macroeconomic policy that demonstrate the relevance of gender to the economic criteria of development planning.

6. The analysis underlying the report is under way but has not yet been completed. The present report is, therefore, an interim one, designed to present to the Council, for its consideration, the approach being taken to the subject. A full report will be provided to the General Assembly.

I. GENDER-RESPONSIVE DEVELOPMENT: A NEW APPROACH

7. Consideration of the meaning and determinants of development and of development policies has produced a succession of approaches over the past three decades. The early preoccupation of development practitioners with economic growth gave way to basic-needs strategies and strategies of collective self-reliance. There then ensued a decade of structural adjustment whose lessons brought about a new definition of development which emphasized the enlargement of the choices and opportunities available to people, viewed development as a participatory, people-centred and all-inclusive process, and gave rise to a new growth theory combining efficiency with equity and providing a framework for analysing endogenous sources of growth. For most of the time, however, the structural presence of women in economic production was largely overlooked by the prevailing paradigm.

8. Towards the end of the 1980s, women-in-development issues, previously given only marginal consideration, became central to the development agenda and to the analysis of variations in economic policy outcomes. The early attempt to "add women as an after-thought" 4/ to the pre-existing model of development gave way to a realization that the success of development itself was highly contingent on women's full participation in it. Numerous studies demonstrated that, without addressing the economic and social situation of women, the development effort was destined to fail, since the pressing problems of poverty, high fertility rates, inadequate health care and illiteracy could only be resolved by tackling the situation of women first. The impermeability of some countries to economic reforms and the disappointing results achieved in others have been linked to, inter alia, lack of consideration of the gender dimension of economic adjustment.

9. The Third United Nations Development Decade ended with a new awareness of the need to give explicit consideration to women when planning for development. The earlier model of the "integration" of women in development was subjected to much criticism, particularly as being limited from the perspective of women's strategic gender interest. 5/ As a result, the women-in-development approach evolved into the "gender and development" approach, which seeks "not only [to] integrate women into development, but [to] look for the potential in development initiative to transform unequal social/gender relations and to empower women". 6/ This approach seeks to remedy the complete disregard for gender in economic theory and policy-making by stressing a gender dimension of micro- and macroeconomic policies and the need to include gender as a variable in economic policy-making and development planning.

10. Although recognized in international development agencies and academic circles, the gender aspect of economic policy-making has not been used as a planning and policy-making tool nor is there a "sustainable dialogue between planners and those within the research community who might help them towards a gender analysis". 7/ To bridge this gap, it is necessary to bring the tools of economic analysis together with gender realities so that the gender dimension can be included in policy formulation and analysis. To do this it is necessary to develop a portfolio of economic arguments that emphasize the relevance of gender to the outcome of economic policies.

II. IMPACT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON WOMEN

11. The purpose of the present report is to identify the areas of relevance of gender to economic policy-making criteria by employing the tools of analysis provided by economic theory and the econometric technique of ordinary least squares regression. It will discuss micro- and macroeconomic modelling of gender and the gender implications of fiscal and monetary policies and development strategies. A regression method will be used to determine the gender-specific implications of economic growth and development strategies, particularly strategies of external openness.

A. Scope and methods of analysis

12. The divergent economic performance of different regions towards the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s reflected the varied experience of the economic policies employed by countries in response to internal and external disequilibria and the pressures of globalization. The economies of East and South-East Asia were able to sustain exceptionally high rates of growth of output and per capita income; those of Latin America resumed an only modest rate of growth after the drastic decline of the early 1980s; and the economies of Africa, particularly those in the sub-Saharan region, experienced little change in the decade-long trend of falling per capita output. The transition to a market economy proved to be costly in terms of declining output and real income, a sharp rise in inequality, a decline in standards of living and deepening gender inequalities. Income distribution appears to have worsened in most of the developing world, apart from the export-driven economies of East and South-East Asia.

13. It is generally agreed among mainstream economists that outward orientation in economic development has been the single most important factor responsible for rapid economic development and the decline of inequality in the first and second generation of the newly industrialized economies. Policies of trade liberalization, of eliminating distortions in factor markets and of better governance, as opposed to distortive interference by Governments with trade and the economy, have been identified as most conducive to growth and poverty reduction. The question that this section of the full report will explore is whether there is also a relationship between economic growth, particularly growth based on export expansion, and an improvement of the economic position of women.

14. To answer this question, the report will present the results of a study, currently under way, that examines the relationship between economic growth, the expansion of exports and women's economic participation. It also considers the impact of the educational attainment of women on their economic participation and the impact of government policy with respect to achieving equality for women. The study utilizes cross-country data, grouped by non-economic factors, for the period 1970-1992. It is expected to show that women do benefit from economic growth and, in some regions, do so more than men, and also that market liberalization and an open economy can be seen as crucial to integrating women in development as well as to achieving greater economic efficiency.

B. Gender issues in economic policy

15. This section of the full report will consider, from a gender perspective, the concepts and models of economic theory that are used for the formulation of policy advice. Microeconomic theory dominated by the marginalist paradigm and the equilibrium perspective makes only passing reference to the economic topics of special importance to women. Even less attention is devoted to such issues at the macro level; gender-specific differences, when shown in macroeconomic data, receive no macroeconomic explanation. The models used in discussing the economics of the household and gender-related issues are based on assumptions that often harbour male biases. Policy advice formulated on the basis of these models is couched in gender-neutral terms but often leads to gender-specific results that escape the attention of economic policy makers for lack of the methodological and statistical tools for addressing them. The result is that, at present, gender issues in economic theory and policy-making are "hidden by the invisible hand". 8/

16. Gender inequalities in access to and participation in markets cause markets to fail to allocate resources efficiently. Factor markets are particularly important, since their inefficiency can inhibit growth and/or worsen income distribution. Gender discrimination in these markets leads to a sub-optimal allocation of resources which entails long-term social opportunity costs, thus providing a rationale for the infant-industry argument for subsidizing innovative credit schemes, the industry in the present case being financial services that provide credit to low-income producers and entrepreneurs. The relative immobility of the female labour force in response to market signals obstructs allocative efficiency in the labour market, and there are social opportunity costs in the loss of efficiency and misallocation of resources resulting from female labour being "locked up" in non-market work. On the other hand, there are positive externalities to female non-market work which can be viewed in terms of the production of a public good and that therefore present a case for public-policy intervention.

17. Economic theory does not have much to say about the household. In macroanalysis the household is considered in terms of providing factor inputs and of consumption, and microeconomics considers primarily its consumption role. Such constructs of microeconomic theory as "comparative advantage", "utility maximization" and "preference functions" are applied to the household just as they are applied to the individual economic agent. The household is treated as a unit which maximizes the joint utility function of its members. Despite the analytical shortcomings of the aggregation of individual family members into a joint utility function, the microeconomic model of the household claims that it behaves as if it were a single entity, maximizing joint utility and welfare. Gender neutrality is in this case assumed to be inconsequential and benevolent. The Becker model of gender specialization, based on individual choice and "comparative advantage", portrays women in a most stereotypical way. 9/

18. Economic growth, inflation and monetary and fiscal policies may each have a differential impact on women. Yet in its discussion of aggregates, macroeconomics omits gender issues entirely. The work carried out by women in reproduction and the maintenance of human resources is excluded from national accounts, and the link between the paid and unpaid economy is therefore lost.

This has important practical consequences. When macroeconomic policies are formulated, the gender dimension of the consequences of changes in market signals and of the reallocation of resources is lost.

19. Repressed financial markets and credit rationing favour capital intensity and may perpetuate discrimination. Small enterprises, including the bulk of businesses owned by women, are forced to seek credit in the curb market where they are obliged to pay interest rates several times higher than in the formal financial sector. To the extent that financial repression discourages the development of light industry, it hurts the economic participation of women. Regulated credit hurts women indirectly by interfering with the efficient allocation of resources and inhibiting economic growth.

20. Policies of trade liberalization and external openness and supporting macroeconomic policies involving exchange-rate management and the maintenance of international competitiveness have been shown to be beneficial for women in terms of improving their economic position and their bargaining power in the family. The loss of competitiveness and real exchange-rate appreciation, on the other hand, tend to affect women to a greater extent than men, because employers still feel free to discriminate against them.

21. The full report will cover the issue of entrepreneurship by utilizing the information provided by the national reports on the extent and nature of the entrepreneurial activities of women and on their access to markets and resources. The discussion of micro- and macroeconomic policies will be linked to entrepreneurship by highlighting the impact they have on women entrepreneurs and producers.

22. More progressive personal taxation schedules, the choice of joint or individual income as the unit of taxation, and reduced reliance on regressive taxation will all tend to be to the advantage of women and will provide incentives for women to seek paid employment. Provision for tax rebates for such expenses as child-care is also desirable in order to encourage high participation rates. Taxation that penalizes exports and the agricultural sector tends to worsen the economic position of women.

III. CONCLUSIONS: STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

23. A growth strategy based on high effective rates of protection and capital intensity has been shown to be inimical to promoting gender equality in development participation and to achieving sustainable growth and development. But the effort to remedy distortions by introducing structural adjustment policies has in many cases led to a worsening of gender inequalities. If economic reforms are to produce efficient and sustainable results at minimum social cost, the gender dimension should be written into the design of macroeconomic policies. This would require introducing gender into the conceptual framework underlying economic analysis and policy-making.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), resolution 1, annex II.

2/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.IV.1.

3/ For example, "Engendering adjustment for the 1990s", report of a Commonwealth Expert Group on Women and Structural Adjustment, 1989, p. 8; "Women's economic potential to overcome poverty", report of an international round table held in Bonn/Konigswinter, 27-30 November 1994. Advance report of findings and recommendations, p. 7.

4/ Diane Elson, "Gender issues in development strategies", paper presented at the Seminar on Integration of Women in Development, Vienna, 9-11 December 1991.

5/ The two-stage "gender planning" model developed by Moser distinguishes, from both a policy and operational viewpoint, between the practical or present interests of women (current inadequacies in the living and working conditions of women, for example) and strategic needs which target more egalitarian gender relations, either by reducing the basis of women's economic disadvantage or by modifying the gender division of labour so that it does not constrict women's income-earning potential. See Caroline Moser, Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training (London, Rutledge, 1993).

6/ Rosi Braidotti and others, Women, the Environment and Sustainable Development: Towards a Theoretical Synthesis (Burbank, Zed Books, 1993), p. 82.

7/ Susan Bullock, Women and Work (Burbank, Zed Books, 1994), p. 30.

8/ S. Feiner and B. Roberts, "Hidden by the invisible hand: neoclassical economic theory and textbook treatment of race and gender", Gender and Society, vol. IV, No. 2 (June 1990), pp. 159-181.

9/ Gary Becker, Treaties in the Family (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1981).